



The Laboratory at 70: A proud history, leaning forward to shape the future

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Seventy years ago on the Pajarito Plateau, the U.S. Army and the University of California joined together to undertake perhaps the most influential effort of the 20th century: the Manhattan Project.

The Project accomplished what it set out to do and gave birth to transformational technologies not only in national security, but in many areas which affect our daily lives. For example, in 1948, work began on the MANIAC computer, one of the first electronic, digital computers. MANIAC's descendants are now everywhere—in our smart phones, tablets, desktop machines, even cars and coffee makers.

The Laboratory plans wide-ranging activities to celebrate its 70th anniversary, with a full roster of lectures and events open to the public. Watch for details in Connections and other media.

National security remains our principal mission

Although we begin 2013 in the midst of a cycle of reduced budgets, it's important to remember that the Laboratory's national security missions remain the same. The nation's nuclear stockpile is aging and growing smaller as we dismantle weapons under international treaties. Without full-scale nuclear testing, it is more important than ever to have the necessary scientific capabilities and infrastructure to ensure the safety and reliability of the remaining weapons.

At the same time, the nation calls upon Los Alamos scientists to help control the spread of nuclear weapons to countries of proliferation concern or to terrorist organizations. Further, developments in climate change and energy security demand our attention.

Taking steps to shape the future

We are actively shaping the future of the Laboratory. For example:

- We resisted a hiring freeze in 2012, because in my experience, a freeze leads to a shortage of talented leaders a few years down the road.
- We kept student and post-doctoral programs intact to support the pipeline of future talent.
- We will increase strategic hires in certain disciplines during the coming year.
- We are actively pursuing projects in supercomputing, accelerator sciences and new laboratory space.

It has been our honor and privilege to serve the nation since 1943. What will be the discoveries that change lives in the 21st century? I am fully confident that several are taking shape right now, at Los Alamos.

Sincerely,

Charlie McMillan

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